

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 771

To improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases through  
Children Advocacy Centers.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 2, 2003

Mr. BIDEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred  
to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse  
cases through Children Advocacy Centers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Victims of Child Abuse  
5 Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE**

7 **ACT OF 1990.**

8 The Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.  
9 13001 et seq.) is amended—

10 (1) in section 211 (42 U.S.C. 13001) by—

1 (A) redesignating paragraphs (6) and (7)  
2 as paragraphs (9) and (10), respectively; and

3 (B) inserting after paragraph (5) the fol-  
4 lowing:

5 “(6)(A) the National Children’s Alliance (NCA)  
6 is a nationwide not-for-profit membership organiza-  
7 tion whose members are local Children’s Advocacy  
8 Centers;

9 “(B) the NCA’s mission is to assist commu-  
10 nities seeking to improve their response to child  
11 abuse by supporting the development, growth, and  
12 continuation of Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs);  
13 and

14 “(C) the NCA provides training, technical as-  
15 sistance, and networking opportunities to CACs na-  
16 tionally;

17 “(7)(A) CACs are community partnerships  
18 committed to a multidisciplinary team approach by  
19 professionals pursuing the truth in child abuse inves-  
20 tigation; and

21 “(B) CACs are based in child-friendly facilities  
22 that enable law enforcement, prosecutors, child pro-  
23 tective services, and the medical and mental health  
24 communities to work as a team to investigate, pros-  
25 ecute, and treat child abuse;

“(8)(A) working in partnership with the National Children’s Alliance, Regional Children’s Advocacy Centers were established by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide outreach and assistance to communities seeking to develop a Children’s Advocacy Center; and

“(B) Regional Children’s Advocacy Centers provide information, consultation, training, and technical assistance helping to establish child-focused programs that facilitate and support coordination among agencies responding to child abuse. Regional Children’s Advocacy Centers also provide regional services to help Children’s Advocacy Centers already in existence;”;

(2) in section 212 (42 U.S.C. 13001a)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (3) and (6);

(B) redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(C) redesignating paragraphs (7), (8), and (9) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respectively;

(3) in section 213 (42 U.S.C. 13001b)—

(A) by striking the caption for the section and inserting “**CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY CENTERS**”; and

1 (B) in subsection (a), by striking beginning  
 2 with “the Administrator” through paragraph  
 3 (1) and inserting the following: “The Adminis-  
 4 trator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and De-  
 5 linquency Prevention shall establish Regional  
 6 Children’s Advocacy Centers to—

7 “(1) focus attention on child victims by assist-  
 8 ing communities to develop and maintain local Chil-  
 9 dren’s Advocacy Centers which are child-focused  
 10 community-oriented facility based programs designed  
 11 to improve the resources available to children and  
 12 families affected by child abuse and neglect;”;

13 (C) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “, in  
 14 coordination with the Director,”;

15 (D) in subsection (c)—

16 (i) in paragraph (1), by striking the  
 17 text and inserting “The Administrator, in  
 18 consultation with the National Children’s  
 19 Alliance, shall solicit proposals for assist-  
 20 ance under this section when existing con-  
 21 tracts with Regional Children’s Advocacy  
 22 Centers are close to expiration.”; and

23 (ii) in paragraph (4)(B), by striking  
 24 the matter before clause (i) and inserting

1 the following: “The Administrator shall se-  
 2 lect proposals for funding that—”;

3 (E) in subsection (d)—

4 (i) in paragraph (1), by striking “, in  
 5 coordination with the Director,”; and

6 (ii) in paragraph (2), by striking “and  
 7 the Director”; and

8 (F) by striking subsection (e);

9 (4) in section 214 (42 U.S.C. 13002)—

10 (A) by amending subsection (a) to read as  
 11 follows:

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in consulta-  
 13 tion with the officials from the Office of Victims of Crime,  
 14 shall make grants to develop and implement local multi-  
 15 disciplinary child abuse investigations and prosecution  
 16 programs. The National Children’s Alliance shall serve as  
 17 the subgrantor of these funds.”; and

18 (B) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “, in  
 19 coordination with the Director,”; and

20 (5) in section 214B (42 U.S.C. 13004), by  
 21 amending the text to read as follows:

22 “(a) SECTIONS 213 AND 214.—There are authorized  
 23 to be appropriated to carry out sections 213 and 214,  
 24 \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2008.

1       “(b) SECTION 214A.—There are authorized to be ap-  
2   propriated to carry out section 214A, \$5,000,000 for each  
3   of fiscal years 2004 through 2008.”.

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